

18. (New) An image pickup apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein the first field image signal and the second field image signal are different in exposure.

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19. (New) An image pickup apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein the first field image signal and the second field image signal are produced with different exposure period.

20. (New) An image pickup apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein said combining circuit selects a proper exposure part of the first field image signal and a proper exposure part of the second field image signal to produce on field image signal.--

REMARKS

The claims now pending in the application are Claims 16 to 20, Claim 16 is the only independent claim. Claims 1 to 15 have been cancelled. Claims 16 to 20 are newly presented.

In the Official Action dated September 11, 2002, the title was objected to as not descriptive of the claimed invention. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,162,914 (Takahashi), in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,949,481 (Sekine). Claims 3, 6, 9, 11, 13 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as unpatentable over the Takahashi '914 patent, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,130,709 (Sekine), further in view of the Sekine '481.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the object and rejections respectfully are requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Initially, Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that the application contains allowable subject matter.

In a formal matter, Applicant notes the Examiner's request for a new title. In this regard, however, Applicant notes that a new title previously was proposed in the Amendment filed October 21, 2001. Accordingly, Applicants believe the request is moot and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

The rejections of the claims over the cited art respectfully are traversed. Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejections, Claims 1 to 15 have been cancelled in favor of newly presented Claims 16 to 20; Claims 16 to 20 have been added to provide Applicant with an additional scope of protection commensurate with the disclosure. No new matter has been added.

The present invention relates to a novel image pickup method and apparatus. In one aspect, as recited in independent Claim 16, the present invention relates to an image pickup apparatus comprising an image sensor that picks up an image corresponding to an optical image, and produces a first field image signal and a second field image signal different from the first field image signal, a combining circuit that combines the first field image signal and the second field image signal in one of a first mode, where a part of the first field image signal and a part of the second field image signal are selected to produce one field image signal, and a second mode, where the first field image signal and the second field image signal are added to produce one field image signal,

a detecting circuit that detects an amount of motion vector and produces a detection signal in comparison with a predetermined threshold level, and a control circuit that selects the first mode or the second mode in response to the detection signal from said detecting circuit.

Applicant submits that the prior art fails to anticipate the present invention. Moreover, Applicant submits that there are differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art, such that the subject matter taken as a whole would not have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art.

The Takahashi '914 patent relates to an image sensing device with diverse storage fumes used in picture composition, and discloses an image sensing device adapted to compose an appropriate single picture from a plurality of pictures of different exposures obtained from the same subject, wherein the camera operation is controlled using as a reference one of the plurality of pictures of different exposures. However, as acknowledged in the Official Action, the Takahashi '914 patent fails to disclose or suggest the feature of detecting a motion vector, and moreover further fails to teach or suggest the feature of controlling image synthesization in accordance with a detected motion vector, as disclosed and claimed in the present application.

The Sekine '481 patent relates to an image sensing and processing device, and was cited for its disclosure of the features of utilizing a motion vector detecting circuit to determining the amount of shake in a camera, and comparing a detected motion vector to a predetermined threshold . Similarly, the Sekine '709 patent relates to an image processing apparatus for correcting image vibration, and was cited for its disclosure of the

feature of correcting for shake, before outputting an enlarged image, using a motion vector detecting circuit and an image shift circuit for shifting the image in accordance with a detection result. However, Applicant submits that neither the Sekine '481 patent nor the Sekine '709 patent discloses or suggests at least the above-described features of the present invention. In particular, neither Sekine '709 reference discloses or suggests the feature of controlling image synthesization in accordance with a detected motion vector, as disclosed and claimed in the present application. Nor are the Sekine '709 patent and the Sekine '481 patent, alone or in combination, believed to add anything to the Takahashi '914 patent that would make obvious the claimed invention.

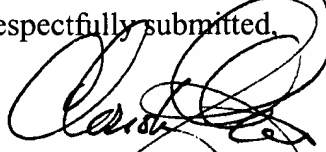
For the above reasons, Applicant submits that independent Claim 16 is allowable over the cited art.

Claims 17 to 20 depend from Claim 16 and are believed allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, each of these dependent claims recites additional features in combination with the features of its respective base claim, and is believed allowable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims respectfully is requested.

Applicant believes that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action, and submits that the application is in allowable form. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the present application at the Examiner's earliest convenience earnestly are solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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